The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom

1875

VI

The Struggle Between Science and Wisdom[1]

[[*Imitation* of antiquity.

The means for such imitation, philology, makes imitation impossible for the philologist. Knowledge without ability.[2]

Hence: philology has either become totally historical or else has been destroyed (Schiller).

Even historical knowledge of antiquity is brought about by means of reproduction and imitation.

Goethean Hellenism (the artistic σωφροσύνη[3] of the Greeks transferred to moral men).]]

[[Greek antiquity provides the classical set of examples for the interpretation of our entire culture and its development. It is a means *for understanding ourselves*, a means for regulating our age—and thereby a means for overcoming it.

The pessimistic foundation of our culture.]]

[[Simply to acknowledge the fact: *Socrates* is so close to me that I am almost continually fighting with him.]][4]

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[1] *Wissenschaft und Weisheit im Kampfe* is the only one of the longer selections in this volume for which the original notebook has been published in *WKG*. I have tried to provide a text which will permit the reader to compare the original with the version produced by the editors of *GOA* and reprinted in later editions of Nietzsche's works. I have included within double brackets all of the passages which were not included in previous, edited versions of *WWK*. I have also arranged the notes in the order they appear in Nietzsche's notebook (an order which varies slightly from the published arrangement). All significant variations between the texts are noted. Finally, the section numbers are those which were added by the editors of *GOA*.

[2] *Kennen ohne können.* I.e. the requirements of the discipline are such that the men who are professionally employed in seeking knowledge concerning classical antiquity have become almost the polar opposites of the men of antiquity. Cf. Nietzsche's exploration of this situation in *WP*.

[3] "moderation."

[4] In *MA* this note is placed at the end of section 188. (Again, except for the section numbers the text of *MA* is identical to the text in *GOA*.)

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The struggle between science and wisdom.[5]

Science (n.b. *before* it has become a habit and an instinct) originates:

1. when the gods are not considered to be good. The great advantage of being able to recognize something as *fixed*;
2. when egoism pushes individuals in certain enterprises, e.g. navigation, to seek their own gain by means of science;
3. as something for aristocratic people of leisure. Curiosity.
4. when the individual wants a more solid foundation amidst the turbulent flux of popular opinions.

What distinguishes this scientific drive from the general drive to learn or undertake anything whatsoever? Only its lower degree of egoism or the broader reach of the same. *In the first case,* the self is lost in the things; *in the second,* there is a selfishness which extends beyond the individual.

Wisdom shows itself:

1. in illogical generalizing and rushing toward final ends,
2. in the bearing which these results have upon life,
3. in the unconditional importance which one ascribes to his soul: "One thing is needful."

Socraticism is: *First,* wisdom in taking the soul seriously.

Second, science as fear and hatred of illogical generalization.

Third, something unique because of its demand for conscious and logically correct conduct. This generates difficulties for science and for ethical life.

[[The Struggle between Science and Wisdom,
exhibited in the ancient Greek philosophers.]]

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1. How does the world look through the eyes of these early Greeks?[6]
2. How do they behave toward those who are not philosophers?

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[5]Though adopted as a title by earlier editors of these notes, a more accurate and informative title is the one which appears a few sections below: "The struggle between Science and Wisdom, exhibited in the ancient Greek philosophers."

[6]*Wie zeigt sich in diesen älteren Griechen die Welt gefärbt.* Literally: "In what colors does the world appear in these early Greeks."

3. Much depends upon their *persons*: the point of my consideration of their teachings is to divine their persons.[7]
4. The struggle between science and wisdom as reflected in their work.
5. Ironic supplementary clause: "all is false." How man clings to a beam.

There is also an *ironic* and *mournful* way to tell this story. In any case, I wish to avoid the even, serious tone.

At a moment when truth was *closest,* Socrates *upset everything*: that is especially *ironic*.

To depict everything against the background of myth. The boundless insecurity and fluctuating character of this. One yearns for something more secure.

The life of the Greeks is illuminated only in those places where the ray of myth falls upon it. Otherwise it is dark. The philosophers now deprive themselves of myths; how then do they endure this darkness?[8]

The individual who wishes to rely *upon himself* requires *ultimate knowledge,* philosophy. Other men require a science which is slowly augmented.

[[Or rather, what is necessary is the belief that one possesses such ultimate knowledge. Never again will there be such a degree of confidence in one's own knowledge as was possessed by those early Greeks. But they were not yet confronted with the difficulty and danger of knowing. They had a sturdy belief in themselves, with which they overcame their neighbors and predecessors. The happiness of possessing truth was never greater, but likewise neither was harshness, arrogance, and *tyranny*. Every Greek was a tyrant in his private wishes, and generally speaking anyone at all who could be a tyrant was one—with the possible exception of Solon, to judge by his own poems.[9]]]

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[7]Compare with the following passage from the Preface to *PtZG,* in which Nietzsche explains the relation he finds between the systems and the personalities of the Greek philosophers:

> "On the other hand,whoever rejoices in great men will also rejoice in such systems; even if they are also totally erroneous, they nevertheless have within themselves one irrefutable point: personal mood and color. One can use such a system to obtain a portrait of the philosopher, just as one can infer something about a soil from the plants which grow in it. *This* way of living and of viewing human matters in any case existed and is therefore possible."

[8]Except for the final clause, this paragraph is almost identical to the opening words of *MAMa,* 261.

[9]Cf. the similar passage in *MAMa,* 261.

Even the independence is only apparent: each person is finally linked with his predecessors. Phantasms linked with phantasms. It is strange to take everything so seriously.

Ancient philosophy in its entirety is a strange *labyrinthian abberation*[10] of reason. The proper note to strike is that of dreams and fairy tales.

[[*Aristotle's aesthetic judgment.*
against Empedocles.
regarding tragedy.
Demosthenes.
Thucydides.
plastic art.
music.]]

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Greek *music* and *philosophy* developed side by side. They are comparable insofar as they both testify to the Hellenic nature. Of course we are acquainted with the music only from its percipitation into lyric.

Empedocles—tragedy
Heraclitus—Archilochus[11]
Democritus—Anacreon[13]
Pythagoras—Pindar[14]
Anaxagoras—Simonides[15]

sacred monody
Xenophanes is *sympotisch*[12]

All comparison of persons is distorted and stupid.

[[Compared to Greek life, *philosophies* are *shades from the underworld.* They reflect Greek life, but as if through a cloud of smoke.

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[10]*Irrgartengang:* Nietzsche's coinage, from *Irrgang* ("mental abberation") and *Irrgarten* ("labyrinth").

[11]Greek lyric poet of the seventh or eighth century B.C., Archilocus is often called the inventor of iambic poetry. In section 5 of *GT* Nietzsche treats him as the first lyric poet.

[12]There is no such word in German. Perhaps this is Nietzsche's coinage based upon the Greek συμπότης ("drinking companion," hence "convivial," "jolly")?

[13]Greek lyricist of the sixth century B.C. Anacreon was court poet to the tyrant Polycrates of Samos and later a member of the poetic circle which gathered around Hipparchus in Athens.

[14]Most eminent of the Greek lyricists (c. 522-443). Pindar is celebrated for his odes.

[15]Greek lyricist (c. 556-469). Simonides of Ceos was a member of the literary circle surrounding Hipparchus. He was an extremely popular and influential poet, widely celebrated for his great wisdom. It is Simonides' definition of justice which is defended by Polemarchus in Plato's *Republic.*

One must stay on the heels of such men until they are re-created by a poet. The complimentary imaginations of many persons must be at work here.

Such men are too rare for us to let them get away. How little can be gained by criticizing, turning over, and shaking every fragment!

Introduction.	First Chapter.	Comparison of the earlier Greek philosophers with the sectarian philosophers who followed Socrates.
	Second Chapter.	The temporal circumstances of the early philosophers.
Narration:]]		

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So much depends upon the development of Greek culture, since our entire occidental world received its original impulse therefrom. Destiny has ordained that the more recent and decadent Hellenism has had the greatest historical power. For this reason the older Hellenism was always falsely judged. One must be minutely acquainted with the more recent type in order to distinguish it from the older type.

There are still very many possibilities which have not yet been discovered, because the Greeks did not discover them. Other possibilities were discovered by the Greeks and then later *covered up* again.[16]

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These philosophers demonstrate *the dangers which were comprised within Greek culture*:

Myth, taken as idleness of thought	—opposed to this, cold abstractions and strict science. Democritus.
The flabby coziness of life	—opposed to this, moderation; the strict ascetic views of Pythagoras, Empedocles, and Anaximander.
Cruelty in battle and in strife	—opposed to this, Empedocles with his reform of the sacrifices.[17]

[16]This note provides one of Nietzsche's clearer explanations of the *urgency* which informs all of his studies of Pre-Platonic philosophy. See above, *P,* n. 3 and cf. *MAMa,* 261.

[17]Several of Empedocles' surviving fragments are concerned with sacrificial reform, specifically they condemn meat eating and blood sacrifice (fragments 128, 135-7). See also the story of how Empedocles constructed a surrogate "sacrificial ox" of barley and honey, which may be found in Diogenes Laertius' *Lives,* VIII, 53.

Lies and deceit	—opposed to this, enthusiasm for truth, no matter what the consequence.
Pliancy and excessive sociability	—opposed to this, the pride and solitude of Heraclitus.

These philosophers indicate the vitality of a culture which produces its own correctives.[18]

How did this age perish? Unnaturally.[19] Where then are the seeds of corruption?

The flight from the world by the best people was a great misfortune. Beginning with Socrates, the individual all at once began to take himself too seriously.

In the case of Athens, the *plague* was added to this.

Then they were *destroyed* by the *Persian wars*. The danger was too great, and the victory was too extraordinary.

The death of great musical lyric poetry and of philosophy.

[[*Socrates* is the *revenge for Thersites*: the splendid Achilles slew the ugly man of the people, Thersites, out of anger over the latter's words concerning the death of Pentesilia.[20] The ugly man of the people, Socrates, slew the authority of splendid myth in Greece.]]

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Early Greek philosophy is the philosophy of *statesmen*. How pitiful our statesmen are! Moreover, this is what best distinguishes the Pre-Socratics from the Post-Socratics.

The Pre-Socratics did not share the Post-Socratics' "detestable pretension to happiness." Everything does not yet revolve around the condition of their souls, for this is something that one does not think about without danger. Later Apollo's γνῶθι σαυτόν[21] was misunderstood.

Furthermore, these early Greeks did not *chatter* and *revile* so much; neither did they *write* so much.

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[18]See above, *P*, n. 9.

[19]This refers to the view, widespread in the early nineteenth century, that Greek history and culture offer a paradigm of "natural development." See below, 197, and also *MAMa*, 261.

[20]Thersites was one of the Greek beseigers of Troy, who is described by Homer as deformed in mind and body. Thersites' ridicule of Achilles' grief over the death of Pethesilia angered Achilles, who then killed Thersites. See *Iliad*, II, 212ff.

[21]"Know thyself!"

Enfeebled Hellenism became Romanized, coarsened, and decorative, and then, as cultural window dressing, was accepted as an ally by enfeebled Christianity and was forcibly disseminated among uncivilized peoples: this is the history of occidental culture. The clever trick of uniting what is Greek with what is priestly has been accomplished.[22]

I wish to combine Schopenhauer, Wagner, and early Hellenism: that will provide a glimpse of a splendid culture.

Comparison of the earlier philosophy with the Post-Socratic kind.

1. The earlier kind is related to *art*. Its solution to the riddle of the universe was frequently inspired by art. The spirit of music and of the plastic arts.
2. The earlier kind is *not* the negation of the *other* life, but *grows* from it like a rare blossom. It utters its secret. (Theory and practice.)
3. The earlier kind is *not* so *individualistic* nor *eudaemonistic*: it lacks the detestable pretension to happiness.
4. Even in their lives these early philosophers possess higher wisdom and not merely cold, prudent rectitude. They picture life in a richer and more complex way. The Socratics simplify things and make them banal.

The three-part history of *dithyramb*:

1. the dithyrambs of Arion,[23] from which the older tragedy proceeds;
2. The agonistic dithyrambs of the state, parallel to domesticated tragedy;
3. the brilliantly chaotic mimetic dithyrambs.

With the Greeks it is frequently the case that an *older* form is the *higher* one, for example, in the cases of *dithyramb* and *tragedy*. The danger for the Greeks lay in *virtuosity* in all genres. With Socrates the virtuosos of living begin. Socrates, the newer dithyramb, the newer tragedy, *the invention of the rhetorician.*

The rhetorician is a Greek invention of later times! They invented "form in itself' (and also the philosopher for it).

How is Plato's struggle against rhetoric to be understood? He *envied* its influence.

Early Hellenism *revealed its strengths in its succession of philosophers.* This

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[22]For a further development of this thought, see *WP,* 42.

[23]A semi-legendary poet of the seventh century B.C., Arion is traditionally credited with the invention of dithyrambic poetry.

revelation *comes to an end* with Socrates, who sought *to engender himself* and reject all tradition.

My general task: to show how life, philosophy, and art can have a more profound and congenial relationship to each other, in such a way that philosophy is not superficial and the life of the philosopher does not become mendacious.

It is a splendid thing that the ancient philosophers were able to live so freely *without thereby turning into fools and virtuosos.* The freedom of the individual was immeasurably great.

The false opposition between *vita practica* and *vita contemplativa*[24] is something Asiatic. The Greeks understood the matter better.

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One can describe these early philosophers as men who experienced the Greek atmosphere and customs as a *constraint* and a *barrier*, and thus they can be described as self-liberators (Heraclitus' struggle against Homer and Hesiod, Pythagoras' struggle against secularization, the struggle of them all, but especially of Democritus, against myth). In comparison with the Greek artists, and indeed, even in comparison with the statesmen, these philosophers lack something in their nature.

I conceive of them as the *forerunners of a reformation of the Greeks,* but not as the forerunners of Socrates. On the contrary, their reformation never occurred; it remained sectarian with Pythagoras. The spirit of reformation was sustained by a single phenomenon[25]—the *development* of *tragedy. Empedocles* is the *unsuccessful reformer*; when he failed, all that remained was Socrates. Aristotle's hostility toward Empedocles is therefore quite comprehensible.

Empedocles–republic—transformation of life—popular reform—attempted with the aid of the great Hellenic festivals.

Tragedy likewise was a means. Pindar?

They did not find their philosopher and reformer. Compare Plato, who was diverted by Socrates. Attempted characterization of Plato *apart from* Socrates: tragedy—profound view of love—pure nature—no fanatical renunciation. The Greeks were evidently *on the point* of discovering a *type of man still higher* than any previous type when they were interrupted by the snip of the shears. The *tragic age* of the Greeks: that is where the matter rests.[26]

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[24]"practical life" and "life of contemplation."

[25]*eine Gruppe von Erscheinungen.*

[26]In *FW*, 149 Nietzsche later returned to the theme of the reformation which failed to occur in Greece. But on this occasion he gives a very different and more positive interpretation to this failure: it is taken to be a sign of the maturity and health of Greek civilization that it proved itself too heterogeneous for any single

1. Portrait of the Greeks, with reference to their dangers and depravities.
2. Counter-portrait of the tragic tendency which opposed the above. The new interpretation of myth.
3. First steps toward the reformers. Attempts to acquire a world picture.[27]
4. Socrates decided the issue. *Plato was diverted.*

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Passion in the works of Mimnermus:[28] hatred of what is *old.*

Pindar's deep melancholy: human life is illuminated only when a ray falls upon it from above.

The tragic element in tragedy is the attempt to understand the world *on the basis of suffering.*

Thales—the unmythical.

Anaximander—natural extinction and generation [interpreted] morally in terms of guilt and punishment.

Heraclitus—lawfulness and justice in the world.

Parmenides—the other world behind this one; this world as a problem.

Anaxagoras—the architect of the universe.

Empedocles—blind love and blind hatred; the profound irrationality within the most rational things in the world.

Democritus—the world is totally lacking in reason and instinctive drive; it has been all shaken together. All gods and myths are superfluous.

Socrates: there remains nothing for me but me myself; anxiety concerning oneself becomes the soul of philosophy.

Plato's attempt to think everything through to the end and to be the redeemer.

These persons are to be depicted in the way that I have depicted Heraclitus[29]—interwoven with what is historical.

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new faith. (It is generally true that in his later works Nietzsche shows a greater appreciation of the strength and value of cultural heterogeneity than in the earlier writings.)

[27]*Weltbild,* which often has the sense of "theory of the universe," or "philosophy of life."

[28]A Greek elegiac poet of the seventh century B.C., Mimnermus of Colophon took as his themes the preciousness of life and the horror of old age.

[29]This certainly seems to refer to the account of Heraclitus which Nietzsche had provided three years earlier in *PW.*

Gradualness rules the world. The Greeks progressed quickly, but they likewise declined with frightening quickness.[30] When the Hellenic genius had exhausted its highest types, Greece declined with the utmost rapidity. An interruption had only to occur once, and the great style of life ceased to be supplied: it was finished in an instant, just like tragedy. One single powerful crank like Socrates, and the break was irreparable. The self-destruction of the Greeks is accomplished in Socrates. I consider it significant that he was the son of a sculptor.

If for once the plastic arts could speak, they would seem to us superficial. In Socrates, the son of a sculptor, their superficiality emerged.

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Men became *more clever* during the middle ages. Calculating according to two standards, the sophistry of conscience and the interpretation of texts: these were the means for this development. Antiquity lacked such a method of *sharpening the mind* under the pressure of a hierarchy and theology. On the contrary, the Greeks became credulous and shallow under their great freedom of thought. One commenced or ceased to believe anything as one wished. For this reason they took no pleasure in forced acuteness and thus in the favorite variety of cleverness of modern times. The Greeks were not very *clever*, that is why Socrates' irony created such a sensation among them.[31] In this regard I frequently find Plato to be rather ponderous.

With Empedocles and Democritus the Greeks were well on the way toward *assessing correctly* the irrationality and suffering of human existence; but, thanks to Socrates, *they never reached the goal.* An unbiased view of man is something which eludes all Socratics, who have those horrible abstractions, "the good" and "the just," on their minds. One should read Schopenhauer and then ask himself why the ancients lacked such profound and clear insight. Did they *have to* lack it? I don't think so. On the contrary, they lost their naive impartiality thanks to Socrates. Their myths and tragedies are much wiser than the ethics of Plato and Aristotle, and their "*Stoics* and *Epicureans*" are *impoverished* in comparison with their earlier poets and statesmen.

Socrates' influence:

1. he destroyed the naive impartiality of ethical judgment,
2. annihilated science,
3. had no feeling for art,

[30]This sentence re-appears in *MAMa,* 261.

[31]Cf. *FW,* 82.

4. wrenched the individual from his historical bonds,
5. and promoted dialectical verbiage and loquaciousness.

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I no longer believe in the Greeks' "*development in accordance with nature*." They were much too talented to be *gradual* in the step by step fashion of the stone and of stupidity.[32] The national misfortune was the Persian wars: the success was too great; all the bad drives broke loose. Individual men and cities were seized by the tyrannical longing to rule over all Hellas. With the domination of Athens (in the spiritual realm) a number of forces were stifled: one need only think of how long Athens remained philosophically unproductive. Pindar would not have been possible as an Athenian. Simonides proves that this is true. Neither would Empedocles or Heraclitus have been possible as Athenians. Almost all the great musicians came from outside Athens. The Athenian tragedy is not the highest form which one might be able to imagine: the heroes of these tragedies are much too deficient in the Pindaric element. In general, how terrible it is that the battle had to break out precisely between *Sparta* and *Athens*! It is impossible to meditate upon this too deeply. *It was the spiritual domination of Athens which prevented this reformation.* One really has to imagine what it was like before this domination existed. It was not something that had to happen;[33] it first became necessary as a consequence of the Persian wars: that is to say, not until after the necessity of such [spiritual] domination was demonstrated by physical and political might. Miletus, for example, was more talented, as was Agrigentum.[34]

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[32]See above, 192 and *MAMa,* 261.

[33]This is Nietzsche's tentative answer to the question raised at the end of section 196 (above): was it necessary that the Greeks remain at a relatively immature state of development? In the present as well as the previous passage he asserts or implies a negative answer to this question. But in the previous case he appears to assign the blame for the abortive development of Greek culture to Socrates, whereas in the second case it appears that he holds the Persian wars, with their attendant economic and political consequences, responsible. The interesting tension between these two "explanations" of the failure of the Greeks to develop beyond a certain point continues to the end of *WWK*. The even more interesting question of the possible connection between these two "causes" is never explored by Nietzsche himself. The idea that Greek culture was destroyed by the political victories of individual states, which eliminated the healthy competitive struggle which was the soil upon which Greek culture blossomed, was already advanced by Nietzsche in *HW*. See also *WP,* 119-23.

[34]Miletus, birthplace of Thales, was the principal Greek city in Ionia; Agrigentum (or Acragas) was one of the largest and most prosperous of the Greek cities in Sicily.

The tyrant who can do whatever he pleases, i.e. the Greek who is held in check by no authority, is a being entirely lacking in moderation: "he overturns the customs of the fatherland; he violates women and kills men arbitrarily."[35] And the tyrannical free spirit, which the Greeks likewise feared, is just as unrestrained. Hatred of kings: a sign of the democratic way of thinking. I believe that the reformation would have been possible if a tyrant had been an Empedocles.

With his demand that philosophers occupy the throne, Plato expressed a *thought* which was formerly *feasible*: he hit upon the notion after the time when it could be realized had passed. Periander?[36]

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Without the tyrant Pisistratus,[37] the Athenians would have had no tragedy: for Solon was opposed to tragedy, but the delight in it had previously been awakened. What did Pisistratus want with these great provocations of sorrow?

Solon's antipathy to tragedy: recall the restrictions placed upon ceremonies of mourning, the prohibition of *threnoi*.[38] The "μανιχὸν πένθος"[39] of the Miletian women is mentioned.

According to the anecdote, what offended Solon was *dissimulation*: the inartistic nature of the Athenian comes to light.

Cleisthenes,[40] Periander, and Pisistratus: promoters of tragedy as popular entertainment, of delight in the μανιχὸν πένθος. Solon desires moderation.

The tendencies to centralization produced by the Persian wars: Sparta and Athens seized upon them. In contrast, no such tendencies existed between 776 and 560, when the culture of the *polis* blossomed. I think

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[35]Compare the discussion in *HW* of the degeneration of the Greek into a cruel and bloodthirsty seeker of revenge.

[36]Tyrant of Corinth (625-585 B.C.), generally reputed to have been a cruel despot and a successful administrator. Periander is one of the "seven sages" of Greek tradition. Presumably the point of Nietzsche's reference is that Periander was actually the type of man who might have been able to establish the city Plato could only dream of.

[37]Athenian statesman and friend of Solon, Pisistratus was tyrant from 561-560 B.C. After being overthrown he re-established his tyranny in 541. Pisistratus was a great patron of art and culture. Under his influence Thespis of Icaria is supposed to have laid the foundations of Greek drama.

[38]"funeral songs," "dirges."

[39]"frantic sorrow."

[40]Tyrant of Sicyon (c. 600-570 B.C.), Cleisthenes was renowned for his wealth and power and for re-establishing the Pythian games.

that, if it had not been for the Persian wars, they would have hit upon the idea of centralization through *spiritual reform*. Pythagoras?

The important thing in those days was the unity of festival and cult; likewise, it is here that the reform would have begun. The *thought of a Panhellenic tragedy*: an infinitely more fertile power would have then developed. Why did this not happen? —after Corinth, Sicyon, and Athens had developed this art [of tragedy]!

The greatest loss that mankind can sustain is when the highest types of life fail to occur. Such a thing happened *in those days*. There is a close parallel between this ideal and the Christian one.[41] (To use Schopenhauer's remark: "Superior and noble men quickly become aware of this education by fate and accommodate themselves to it with flexibility and profitability. They realize that instruction is indeed to be found in the world, but not happiness, and they finally say with Petrarch, '*altro diletto, che 'mparer, non provo*.'[42] This can even reach the point where they attend to their wishes and endeavors merely so to speak for the sake of appearances and in a trifling manner, while actually, in the seriousness of their inner selves, they anticipate nothing but instruction—which gives them thereupon a contemplative, exalted air of genius." *Parerga* I, 394.[43] (Contrast this with the Socratics' and their pursuit of happiness!)

[[The terrible conversation described by Thucydides between the Athenians and the Melians![44] Hellenism had to perish because of such ways of thinking, perish from *fear* on all sides. For example, the way in which the Athenian says: "So far as the benevolence of the gods is concerned, we will be at no disadvantage, for we desire and do nothing which goes beyond human nature—neither regarding beliefs in the gods nor regarding that which men desire for themselves."]]

[[Luther: "I have no better labor than anger and zeal. For if I wish to compose, write, pray, and preach well, I must be angry. In this manner my blood is refreshed, my understanding sharpened, and all listless thoughts and temptations vanish."[45]]]

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[41] Presumably the parallel is between the unfulfilled or unactualized character of the two ideals. Perhaps Paul might be thought to stand in a relationship to Christianity somewhat comparable to Socrates' relationship to Greek culture and philosophy.

[42] "I feel no happiness, except in learning."

[43] From the end of section A of Part of *Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit* in *Parerga und Paralipomena*, I.

[44] In Book V of *The Peloponnesian War*, Chapter 7.

[45] From Luther's "Tabletalk," as recorded by C. Cordatus. *Tischreden*, II (Weimar: Böhlaus, 1913), p. 455. (The German version quoted by Nietzsche

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It is a beautiful truth that to a person whose goal in life has become self-improvement or discernment all things serve for the best. Yet this is only true in a limited sense: [just consider] a seeker of knowledge who is forced to engage in the most exhausting kind of labor, or a seeker after self-improvement who is ennervated and unhinged by sickness! It may be admitted that on the whole what appears to be premeditated by fate is really the achievement of the individual who puts his life in order and learns from everything, absorbing knowledge in the way that the bee absorbs honey. But that fate which befalls a people is one which concerns a totality, which, unlike an individual, cannot reflect upon its existence and furnish it with goals. Thus the notion of premeditation by peoples is a fabrication of oversubtle minds. Nothing is easier to demonstrate than the lack of premeditation: e.g. when an age which is in full blossom is suddenly surprised by a snowfall which kills everything. There is just as much stupidity in this as there is in nature. Even under the most unfavorable conditions, every people probably accomplishes to a certain extent something which reminds one of their talents. But in order for a people to be able to accomplish its *best,* certain accidents must not occur. The Greeks did not accomplish their best.

Even the Athenians would have developed somewhat higher had it not been for the political furor following the Persian wars. One should recall Aeschylus, who was born in the time before the Persian wars and who was dissatisfied with the Athenians of his day.

Many conditions favorable to the formation and development of great individuals were eliminated by the unfavorable situation of the Greek cities following the Persian wars, and thus the production of genius is indeed dependent upon the fate of a people. For dispositions toward genius are very common, but the concurrence of all the necessary favorable conditions is very rare.

This reformation of the Hellenes would, as I envision it, have become a wonderful soil for the production of geniuses, a soil such as there had never been before. That would be something to describe! We lost something expressable then.

The Hellenes' higher *ethical* nature is revealed by their wholeness and simplicity. By showing us man in a *simplified* form, they delight us in the way that the sight of animals does.

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differs slightly from the German and Latin version in the Weimar edition of Luther's Works.)

Philosophers strive to understand that which their fellow men only live through. By interpreting their own existence and coming to understand its dangers, the philosophers at the same time interpret their existence for their people.

The philosopher wishes to replace the *popular picture of the world* with a *new one*.

[[*Thales' league of cities*:[46] he saw the fatal destiny of the *polis* and saw that myth was the foundation of the *polis*. If he broke down myth then perhaps he also broke up the *polis*. Thales as statesman. The struggle against the *polis*.

Heraclitus' attitude toward the Persians: he was clear about the dangers of the Hellenic and of the barbaric.

Anaximander as a founder of colonies.

Parmenides as a lawgiver.

Empedocles, the democrat with social reform up his sleeve.]]

[[Words are the seducers of philosophers; they struggle in the nets of language.[47]]]

[[The *power of the individual* is extraordinary in Greece: the power to found cities and to establish laws.]]

Science probes the processes of nature, but it can never *command* men. Science knows nothing of taste, love, pleasure, displeasure, exaltation, or exhaustion. Man must in some way *interpret*, and thereby evaluate, what he lives through and experiences.[48] Religions gain their power by being *standards of value*, criteria. An event appears in a different light when looked at from the point of view of myth. Religious interpretations have this to be said for them: that they measure life according to human ideals.

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[46] According to Herodotus (*Histories,* I, 170), Thales proposed a general league of Ionic cities, including a central government with its capital at Teos.

[47] Cf. *P,* 118 and n. 83.

[48] Here Nietzsche returns to a theme which had featured prominently in *P* and which was later to be central in his better-known published works, and which finds its fullest expression in the account of man as a creator of values in *Zarathustra.* See also "Appendix" to *P,* 2. (Note that Nietzsche, at the time of this note, had not yet clearly grasped the *darker* side of human evaluation, viz. that man could also come to *condemn* the world for failing to "measure up" to his human ideals. This is as true of scientific as it is of religious ideals, as Nietzsche was later to see with unsurpassed clarity. (See *PAK,* n. 5.)

Aeschylus lived and fought in vain; he came too late. This is what is tragic in Greek history: the greatest figures, like Demosthenes, came too late to be able to rescue the people.

Aeschylus vouches for a spiritual height of the Greeks, which died out with him.

Today everyone admires the gospel of the tortoise: the Greeks, alas, ran too swiftly. What I seek in history are not the happy ages, but those which offer a favorable soil for the *production* of genius. This is what I find in the times before the Persian wars. One cannot become too well acquainted with this period.[49]

1. These philosophers [considered] in isolation, each separately.
2. Then as witnesses concerning that which is Hellenic. (Their philosophies are the underworld shades of the Greek nature.)
3. Then as combatants against the dangers of that which is Hellenic.
4. Then as unsuccessful reformers in the course of Hellenic history.
5. Then as opposing Socrates and the sects and the *vita contemplativa*, by attempting to achieve a *form of life,* which has *still not* been achieved.

Many men live a *dramatic* life, many an *epic* life, and many an inartistic and confused life. Thanks to the Persian wars, Greek history has a *daemon ex machina*.[50]

[[Anaxagoras' νοῦς is an ἄθεος *ex machina*.[51]]]

Attempt at a popular culture.

The waste of the most previous Greek *spirit* and Greek *blood*! Through this it can be shown how men must learn to live much more *prudently*. In Greece tyrants of the spirit were almost always assassinated and they had

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[49]The order of the brief notes from here to the "Notes for the Introduction" differs in the notebook and in *GOA/MA*. I have followed the order of the notebook at this point.

[50]A variant of *deus ex machina:* "god from the machine" (originally referring to a piece of stage machinery for introducing a god into the action of a theatrical drama).

[51]On *nous,* see *P,* n. 64. *Atheos* means "non-god" (as in "atheism"). But contrast this little pun with *PtZG,* 17, where Nietzsche complains that it is unjust to dismiss Anaxagoras' *nous* as a mere *deus ex machina!*

only few successors.[52] Other ages, for example the Christian era, demonstrated their strength by thinking a single great thought through to its end and following up all of its possibilities. But among the Greeks it was very difficult [for any idea] to obtain such prominence: everything there was hostile to everything else. The only kind of culture which has been *established* until now is the culture of the city. We still live within this culture today.

City culture.
World culture.
Popular culture: how weak it is among the Greeks, properly speaking, nothing but a faded form of the city culture of Athens.

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Continuous Written Copy of the Introduction[53]

1. There undoubtedly comes for every man an hour when he stands before himself with wonder and asks: "How does one manage to live at all? Yet nevertheless one does live!"—an hour when he begins to comprehend that he possesses an inventive faculty similar to the kind that he admires in plants, an inventiveness which twists and climbs until it finally forcibly gains a bit of light for itself and a small earthly kingdom as well, thus itself creating its portion of delight from barren soil. In one's own descriptions of one's own life there is always a point like this: a point where one is amazed that the plant can continue to live and at the way it nevertheless sets to work with unflinching valour. Then there are careers, such as that of the thinker, in which the difficulties have become enormously great. And when something is related concerning careers of this sort one must listen attentively, because from such cases one learns something concerning the *possibilities of life*. And just to hear about these possibilities leads to greater happiness and strength, for they shower light on the lives of those who come after. Everything here is as resourceful, sensible, daring, desperate, and hopeful as, for instance, the voyages of the globe's greatest circumnavigators. In fact, the career of the thinker is of a somewhat similar sort: they too are circumnavigators of life's most remote and dangerous regions. What is astonishing in careers of this sort is the way in which two hostile drives, which press in opposite directions, are constrained to proceed under a *single* yoke, so to speak. The drive which desires knowledge must again and again leave the inhabited lands behind and venture forth into the unknown; and the drive which desires life must again and again grope its way back to an approx-

[52] A similar passage occurs in *MAMa,* 261.
[53] This heading was, of course, added by the editors of *GOA.*

imately secure place on which it can stand. We are reminded of James Cook, who for three months had to feel his way across a chain of reefs with his sounding-lead in his hand, and for whom dangers often increased to the point that he was glad to return for refuge, even to a location which he had shortly before considered to be most dangerous. (Lichtenberg IV, 152.)[54] The more powerful the two drives, the greater the struggle between life and knowledge becomes, and the rarer it is for them to remain under a single yoke. Thus the struggle increases and unity becomes rarer as life becomes more full and flourishing and as knowledge in turn becomes more insatiable and impells one more covetously toward every adventure.

2. Therefore, I never tire of setting before my mind a series of thinkers in which each individual has within himself that incomprehensibility which forces us to wonder just how he discovered his possibility of life: the thinkers who lived in the most powerful and fruitful Greek era, in the centuries before and during the Persian wars. For the possibilities of life discovered by these thinkers were, in addition, *beautiful possibilities of life*; it seems to me that the later Greeks neglected the best of these, and what people up until the present day can claim to have rediscovered them? Compare the thinkers of other ages and peoples with that series of figures which begins with Thales and ends with Democritus—yes, just compare Socrates and all the later leaders of Greek sects with these ancient Greeks. That is what we now wish to do in this book, and it is to be hoped that others will do it better still. Nevertheless, I am confident that every consideration [of these Greeks] will conclude with the exclamation "how beautiful they are!" I see among them no deformed and ruined figures, no priestly faces, no scrawny desert hermits, no fanatics looking at the world through rose-colored glasses, no theologizing counterfeiters, no depressed and pale scholars (although the seeds of all of these are present and all that is needed in addition is an evil puff of wind, and then every weed will burst into blossom).[55] I also fail to see any among them who consider the "salvation of the soul" or the question "what is happiness?" so important that they forget the world and men on that account. If only someone could rediscover *"these possibilities of life"*! Poets and historians ought to brood over this task, for such men are too rare for us to be able to afford to let them escape. On the contrary, one should not rest until he has recreated their portraits and has painted

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[54]From G.C. Lichtenberg's essay *"Einige Lebensumstände von Capt. James Cook,"* in *Vermischte Schriften,* IV (Göttingen: Dieterichschen, 1867), p. 152.

[55]This interesting parenthetical remark in the published text of *WWK* (in both *GOA* and *MA*) inexplicably does not appear in the text of the notebook published in *WKG.*

them on the walls a hundred times—and when one has done this, then he will certainly grant himself no peace. For our age, which is so inventive, still lacks precisely that discovery which the ancient Greeks must have made: for what else could be the source of their marvelous beauty and of our ugliness? For what is beauty if not the mirror image which we behold of nature's extraordinary delight when a new, fruitful possibility of life has been discovered? And what is ugliness if not nature's self-discontent, its doubt about whether it still really understands the art of enticing us toward life?

3. Greek philosophy seems to begin with an absurd notion, with the proposition that water is the source and the maternal womb of all things. "Is it really necessary," one may ask himself, "to pause here and deliberate seriously on this absurd proposition?" Yes it is, and for three reasons: first, because it asserts something concerning the origin of things; second, because it does so without images and mythical fables; and third, because this proposition contains the thought that "all is one"—even though it contains it in an embryonic state. The first reason still leaves Thales in partnership with religion and superstition; the second removes him from this association and shows him to have been the first [scientific] investigator of nature; on the strength of the third reason Thales is considered to be the first Greek philosopher.[56] In Thales for the first time the man of science triumphs over the man of myth, and then the man of wisdom triumphs in turn over the man of science.

How was it even possible for Thales to renounce myth? Thales as statesman! Something must have occurred at this point. If the *polis* was the focal point of the Hellenic will and if the *polis* was based upon myth, then abandoning myth meant abandoning the old concept of the *polis*. Now we know that Thales proposed, though he did not accomplish, the foundation of a league of cities: he ran aground on the old mythical concept of the *polis*. At the same time he had a foreboding of the enormous danger to Greece if this isolating power of myth continued to keep the cities divided. In fact, had Thales brought his league of cities into being, the Greeks would have been spared the Persian wars and therewith the victory and predominance of Athens. All of the early philosophers took pains to alter the concept of the *polis* and to create a Panhellenic way of thinking. Heraclitus even appears to have torn down the barrier separating the barbaric and the Hellenic in order to create

[56]Up to this point, this paragraph is almost identical to the opening passage of *PtZG*, 3.

greater freedom and to broaden narrow points of view. [[—The significance of water and of the sea for the Greeks.]][57]

[[*Thales*: what impelled him toward science and wisdom? But above all, [it was] the struggle against myth, against the *polis*, which is founded upon myth: the sole means of protecting what is Hellenic, of preventing the Persian wars. All the philosophers shared a Panhellenic aim.]]

Anaximander: the struggle against myth, insofar as myth coddles people and makes them superficial, and thus leads the Greeks into danger.

[[*Heraclitus*: the struggle against myth, insofar as myth isolates the Greeks and opposes them to the barbarians. He ponders a superhellenic world order.]]

Parmenides: Theoretical disdain for the world as a deception. The struggle against the fanciful and unstable character of the entire [mythical?] way of looking at the world. He wishes to grant mankind rest from political passion. Lawgiver.

Anaxagoras: The world is irrational, yet nevertheless measured and beautiful. This is how men should be, and this is the way he found them to be among the early Athenians: Aeschylus, etc. His philosophy is a mirror image of early Athens: legislation for men who have no need of laws.

Empedocles: Panhellenic reformer; a scientifically grounded Pythagorean manner of living. New mythology. Insight into the irrationality of both drives—love and hatred. Love, democracy, communal property. Comparison with tragedy.

Democritus: The world is irrational. In addition, it is neither measured nor beautiful, but merely necessary. The unconditional elimination of everything mythical. The world is comprehensible. He prefers the *polis* (rather than the Epicurean garden). That was a possibility of Hellenic life.

Socrates: The tragic velocity of the Greeks. The earlier philosophers had no effect. The virtuosos of life: the early philosophers always think like *Icarus*.[58]

The Greeks have certainly never been *overrated*: for this would only be possible if they had first been evaluated as they deserve to be. But just this is impossible. How could our evaluation do them justice? We have evaluated them only *falsely*.

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[57] In place of this clause, which appears here in Nietzsche's notebook, *MA* and *GOA* print the last clause from the paragraph on Heraclitus which follows, viz. "he ponders the Superhellenic world order."

[58] *die alten Philosophen denken immer ikarisch.* I.e. they rose too high and soon fell, like Icarus, who flew so close to the sun that his wax wings melted and he fell into the sea.